CHANCELLOR PASQUIER.

REMINISCENCES OF THE REVOLUTION, THE CONSULATE AND THE EMPIRE.

A HISTORY OF MY TIME. MEMOIRS OF CHANCELLOR PASQUIER. Edited by the Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier. Translated by Charles E. Roche. The Revolution—The Consulate—The Empire. Vol. I., 1789-1810. Pp. xxi., 559. Charles Scribner's Sons.

To have been Prefect of Police in Paris under Napoleon was to be in a position for writing interesting memoirs—especially as the author followed two such men as Fouché and Dubois, the one by nature a conspirator, the other watchful on every hand for the bribes that readily sought him. But the Prefecture was not the beginning of Pasquier's career. It came to him in mature life and at a time when men already presaged the downfall of the power which Bonaparte had created and sustained. But the consideration that he had been only one of the personages in the varied scenes through which he had passed, and that often for long periods of time he had played only the part of an onlooker, led him to hesitate after he had written out his recollections as to the title which he ought to give them. For he was cognizant of a vast array of facts and incidents in which he had an actual share, and these were, from his point of view, indispensable to the comprehension of events in French national life. It shows the care which Pasquier bestowed on his reminiscences that he wrote a preface in which he discussed the arguments in favor of the two titles most likely to be given to his book if it ever appeared in print. He remarked that the word "Memoirs" was well-worn, and that he himself did not fill a place sufficiently important in his own narrative to claim such a phrase. On the other hand, he doubted if he could say he had written history when he had passed in silence over many things sometimes of great importance. Finally he concluded that the most appropriate title would be "A History of My Time."

The author of this book was born in 1767. He therefore grew up as a child under the influences which proved fatal to the old order of things in France. His birth, as he says, was in the midst of surroundings "which seemed to presage a peaceful life, and a large fortune which never descended to me." Unfortunately, his mother was deeply wrought upon by the writings of Rousseau. She had, in fact, so far shared the feeling of homage common in those days among women toward the author of "Emile" that in order to see him "she had availed herself of the pretence, then in general vogue, of taking to him some music for the purpose of having it copied." Her son suffered from the effects of this whim. "Under pretence," says he, "of hardening me to the inclemencies of the weather during a couple of severe winters (I was then in my fourth and fifth years), I was taken to the Garden of the Tuileries while but lightly clad. There, it was asserted, I should surely obtain warmth by taking exercise. I was told to run about; but the cold deprived me of the necessary strength to obey, so the result of this system was to make me the most chilly of mortals." Strangely enough, the mother who was thus affected by the teachings of Rousseau was religious to the degree of superstition, and was opposed to vaccination as an act of impiety, a tempting of Providence. By his father's decision, Pasquier was saved from smallpox, while his sister, left to the mother's control, was attacked by the disease, and as a result bore its marks all her life.

Thus it will be seen that the youth was subject to the influences of a religion and of a spirit of innovation both equally unreasoning. On the other hand, he owed to his grandfather a training in the ideas of the old magistracy. For this ancestor Pasquier seems to have cherished the most affectionate admiration. Yet the former might not have approved of the changes in politics which the grandson accepted as necessary. The very fact that he had been a fellow student of Voltaire, and thus became familiar with the modes of thought characteristic of that destructive foe of the past, led him to a feeling of reaction. "His sincere piety," wrote his grandson, "bore no trace of exaggeration. He avoided argument over these matters, and was content to testify his belief by a faithful observance of its pratices." Aside from these influences, Pasquier's education was such as was usual with persons of his rank. He learned the ways of the world in a social circle dignified and yet indulgent. Thus, as he says, "the old régime, the one preceding the Revolution of 1793, was not a sealed book to me; I was already of this world ere its downfall." He was thoroughly trained in the usages and traditions of that old world, and yet he was, like other young men, carried away by the ideas of independence which were in the air. It was only as a spectator of the scenes that occurred in 1789 that he recovered his royalist equilibrium.

From the day in January, 1787, when, not quite twenty years of age, he became a councillor of the "Parlement" of Paris, he studied with watchful eyes the rapid march of events toward the Revolution. As a member of the magistracy he may have shared the feeling of opposition shown in the Parlement toward the measures proposed by the Ministers of the King, yet he "saw in that opposition the beginning of the series of facts which were to lead, without interruption, to the Revolution of 1789." His mature reflection was that the Parlement "yielded too easily to a craving for popularity, to which its natural importance should have rendered it indifferent. Not only did it refuse to register the taxes; it also declared itself forever incompetent to grant such registration, and in so doing committed the greatest of mistakes, by disposing of a future that did not belong to it." He saw that youth had shaken off the yoke of its elders. Imagination instead of experience became the guide of an organization which for hundreds of years had been the gravest and wisest court in Europe. "Not having any other mentors," says Pasquier, significantly, "is it to be wondered at that this youth should have been carried away by the seductive examples cast in its path by the greatest names of France, the La Rochefoucaulds, the d'Harcourts, the Luynes, the d'Aumonts, the Luxembourgs, the Praslins, and so many more?" Then he adds, not excluding himself: "Those who were more clever, or who had more advanced ideas than the others, took care to fan the flames of our effervescence." It was among these youthful heads, turned by the novelty of the life they were living, that the fatal suggestion was made of calling the States-General. The thought was like vice—the more it was cherished, the more welcome it became. And yet Pasquier was cool enough to observe the perturbation into which older and wiser men were thrown by the hints uttered on all sides of them.

"Young man," said one of these old magistrates who saw young Pasquier's excitement, "a similar idea was frequently broached in the days of your grandfather, and this is what he then always told us: 'Gentlemen, this is no child's play; whenever France sees the States-General for the first time, she will also witness a terrible revolution.'"

Such warnings caused Pasquier and a few like him to hesitate. But warnings were wasted on the majority. And so it came about that Pasquier took part in the opening of the States-General. "In spite of the pomp with which the royal power was surrounded, I there saw the passing away of the old régime." And after years of meditation, perhaps with the fondness of age for the memories of youth, he adds: "I firmly believe that from the earliest days of the monarchy France had at no period been happier than she was then. . . . When I question my reason and my conscience as to the possible future of the France of 1789, if the Revolution had not burst; if the ten years of destruction to which it gave birth had not weighed heavily upon that beautiful country; if Santo Domingo, for instance, had continued pouring its treasures into it; if the successive betterments to which I have alluded had not been checked by great catastrophes, I am convinced that the France of which I am writing would be richer and stronger than she is to-day." As he began, so he proceeded. He not only took part in the opening of the States-General, but he was present at the taking of the Bastile, where he denied that any resistance was shown. When the King made his entry into his capital, Pasquier followed him "from the city's gate to the dome of bayonets and drawn swords under which he ascended the steps of the Hôtel-de-Ville." As a spectator of the treatment received by the King and Queen, his wavering mind returned to Royalist convictions, since he was neither giddy enough to divest his mind of the spectacle, nor enough of a stoic to consider it as a necessary condition of the great destinies which awaited France. But he did not share the feelings of that crowd of the aristocracy which emigrated as lightly as if on a pleasant excursion, and returned usually only to meet death. "In spite of my Royalist opinions," says he, "a certain amount of easy-going, inherent in my character, which has never failed me, caused me to live in good enough harmony with a few men whose opinions did not harmonize with mine, in spite of the remonstrance which my conduct too often drew upon me from my family and friends." He tried to see both sides of the business of the times, and he was convinced that the Royalists were not those who most cleverly managed their affairs. It was in this spirit of toleration that he passed through the Revolution, grieved by the execution of his father, himself a prisoner, more than once in danger of his life, for months a starved and hunted man. At the end his good-will was such that he no sooner witnessed the return of order under the Empire than he again sought political occupation. He obtained it mainly because of Napoleon's desire to conciliate the members of the old aristocracy. Yet his advance in the good graces of the Emperor was slow. He was not so serviceable as his rivals, and he claimed the possession of a conscience. He illustrates his independence by describing a scene in which the Emperor violently upbraided a member of the Council of State, whom Pasquier nevertheless ventured to defend. Subsequently he attended the audience of the Emperor, wondering, as others also did, what would happen. But the Emperor, on coming to him, merely remarked:

"I am afraid, sir, that you do not possess very clear notions of the duties of a Councillor of State."

"In this respect, as in every other, Sire," was Pasquier's answer, "I believe that a man does not risk making many mistakes if he but listens to the dictates of his conscience."

Possibly it was Pasquier's character as an honest man, not less than his training in the ranks of the old magistracy, which led the Emperor to make him Prefect of Police in place of the avaricious and corrupt Dubois. Toward this man and his predecessor, Fouché, and M. de Talleyrand, whatever bitterness there was in Pasquier's nature flowed out. In speaking of Talleyrand, something of that great wit's dexterity of speech seems to inspire him. When he essays to draw the portrait of the man he hated he wondered how one was to reproduce such changing colors. He believes that Talleyrand was more to blame than all others for the death of the Duc d'Enghien, that he became the tool and adviser of Alexander of Russia in the Congress of Erfurt, and that he swallowed his bitter hatred of Fouché and plotted with him how to control the Empire in anticipation of Napoleon's fall or possible death during the Spanish campaign. The most startling passage of his first volume is that in which he tells how the Emperor dealt with Talleyrand after returning from Spain. Upon depriving him of the post of High Chamberlain the Emperor is said to have poured out upon him for half an hour a torrent of invectives like the following:

You are a thief, a coward, a man without honor, you do not believe in God; you have all your life been a traitor to your duties, you have deceived and betrayed everybody; nothing is sacred to you; you would sell your own father. I have loaded you down with gifts, and there is nothing that you would not undertake against me. Thus, for the last ten months, you have been shameless enough, because you supposed, rightly or wrongly, that my affairs in Spain were going astray, to say to all who would listen to you that you always blamed my undertaking there, whereas it was you yourself who first put it into my head, and who persistently urged it. And that man, that unfortunate (he was thus designating the Duc d'Enghien), by whom was I advised of the place of his residence? Who drove me to deal cruelly with him? What then are you aiming at? What do you wish for? What do you hope? Do you dare to say? You deserve that I should smash you like a wineglass. I can do it, but I despise you too much to take the trouble.

Talleyrand listened quietly, apparently unmoved. In fact, all that Pasquier has to say only shows that the famous Minister was averse to following the fortunes of any master beyond the boundary of his own safety. He was ready to be used by Napoleon, and was used by him even after this savage rebuke. His foresight, if not his consistency and honesty, was shown in his facility for changing masters.

Ending as this volume does with the fatal expedition against Russia, it is plainly only the prelude to the story of events which the other two volumes of the work should contain.

REMBRANDT.

M. MICHEL'S LIFE OF THE PAINTER.

REMBRANDT: HIS LIFE, HIS WORK AND HIS TIME. By Emile Michel, Member of the Institute of France. From the French by Florence Simmonds. Edited by Frederick Wedmore. Illustrated. In two volumes. Folio. Pp. xxiv, 320; xi, 294. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Out of a brief biography of Rembrandt which M. Michel published nearly ten years ago has grown the work which he recently gave to the world in French, and now offers in English to a wider audience. In this form this distinguished critic's monograph on a painter he has studied with singular patience and sympathy has a symmetry of arrangement and a lucidity of exposition which can be ungrudgingly commended. Over questions of chronology there will always be wrangles, and M. Michel is, of course, no more of a final arbiter of taste than any of his predecessors; but his judgments are well reasoned and temperate, he has sifted the great library of Rembrandt literature with admirable discretion, and his "Life" meets most successfully the need of a copious yet popular history of the Dutch painter who ranks with the giants of Italy and Spain. Less imposing in dimensions than it seems at a first glance—for much space in these two volumes is given up to illustrations and to a catalogue of Rembrandt's works—it is a "Life" as compact as it is thorough. For the simplicity and engaging proportions of his narrative M. Michel is indebted in an unusual degree to the nature of Rembrandt's career. Situated at one period at the very pinnacle of fame, and reduced to obscurity before his death, he passed through years which, nevertheless, appear uneventful in the extreme when compared with the life of Raphael, say, or Michael Angelo. The only complexities of existence he knew were those forced upon him by financial and legal troubles. He was of a sedentary disposition. He never travelled, for, as M. Michel clearly shows, the legend of a brief sojourn in England is very legendary indeed. His life is written not in a series of actions, but more completely and exclusively in his work than is the case with any other painter of his eminence. Thus M. Michel provides us not merely with a biography but with a running comment on the paintings, etchings and drawings by Rembrandt with which the museums and private galleries of the world are adorned, and with which he has a close acquaintance.

Rembrandt was born at Leyden on July 15, 1606. His father was Harmen Gerritsz, a miller by occupation, well-to-do, and sufficiently in- [illegible] education, artistic and otherwise, to enter his son at the famous university of the town, and to seek a painting master for him with the utmost care. Rembrandt had no taste for the Latinity of the university and abundant aptitude for pictorial art. There was not any of the traditional opposition raised by his parents. They abandoned their first plans without murmur, and in the neighborhood of his fifteenth year apprenticed him for three years to Jacob von Swanenburch, a mediocre painter long since forgotten, but at that time something of a celebrity in the town which could boast of no artistic guild such as flourished in places like Haarlem and The Hague. Rembrandt developed rapidly under the elementary tuition of Swanenburch, and at the end of his apprenticeship was permitted to seek the studio of Pieter Lastman, in Amsterdam. In his new atelier, without imitating his master, he strengthened his art in composition and chiaroscuro under the teaching of principles, classic in tendency, which Lastman had picked up in the noted circle of Adam Elsheimer at Rome. But while Rembrandt profited by the substratum of scientific truth in Lastman's work, he was opposed by temperament to classic or academic ideas, and in less than six months left Amsterdam for his home in Leyden. There he worked unceasingly for about seven years, gathering about him an enthusiastic band of young men, of whom Dou and Lievens were the most conspicuous, and producing with the brush and the needle pictures which won him more than local fame—for we read of much patronage reaching him from Amsterdam. He settled in the latter city in 1631. The fashionable painter of the day was Thomas de Keyser, a masterly exemplar of the realistic portraiture which prevailed early in the seventeenth century. Rembrandt was already feeling his way toward the elastic and flowing style which is characteristic of him at his best; but he was too young to dethrone a tradition offhand, and it is no reflection on his independence or originality that his portraits conformed, in the main, to the standard he found in favor at the time. He compromised tacitly by surpassing De Keyser and his contemporaries on their own ground. Through the brilliancy of a succession of works well illustrated, by the way, by Mr. Havemeyer's important Beresteyn portraits, and culminating in "The Anatomy Lesson" of The Hague, he made for himself a dazzling position among his fellow artists. Fromentin, a genial critic of Dutch art, did not respond with his accustomed readiness to the appeal of "The Anatomy Lesson"—an appeal in which there is foreshadowed the imperious note of Rembrandt's prime—and he has passed some well-remembered judgments upon it. Yet, after Fromentin's worst strictures have been admitted, the defects in the treatment of the corpse and the lack of the Rembrandtesque profundity in the coloration, it remains an unequivocal demonstration of unique power. Rembrandt had still the sobriety of the prevailing school and still studied accuracy of feature from their placidly analytic point of view; but he had gone immeasurably beyond De Keyser and the rest in psychological interest and in breadth and beauty of style. Commissions for portraits poured in upon him, and by the time he married the young, rich and handsome woman whom he loved devotedly, Saskia von Uylenborch, in 1634, he was the foremost artist of his day. Saskia, the wife whose beauty he never tired of celebrating, brought him untold happiness. He was passionately in love with her, but was enamoured of his art with equal fervor. His industry at this period was incredible. Masterpieces of painting and etching issued from his studio, in which, at the same time, he was accumulating the decorations and objects of art which he valued for their own sake and as appropriate accessories for his designs. As his place in the artistic world of Holland grew more secure he sought more and more to perfect his art according to the promptings of his genius, and less and less according to the prejudices of his sitters and colleagues. After a decade of ever-increasing triumph, he defied all the cherished conventions of his public, and in "The Night Watch" of 1642 reached his climacteric and at the same time marked the turning of the tide on which he had so long ridden in safety and honor. Saskia died a few months later.

M. Michel's first volume rightly pauses upon the termination of that fecund period in which Rembrandt's powers were stimulated by the sunshine of domestic happiness and rendered more assertive by the hotter rays of public approval. The discordant note of failure which enters at this epoch springs from a condition of things which carries the student into details of Dutch social and civic life. The spirit of co-operation and the national pride which had erected the strongest bulwarks of the Netherlands were nowhere more effective than in the creation of military corporations whose patriotism was continually fanned by the sense of local and personal distinction. Each guild was proud of its civic power, but prouder of itself. The idea of organization was shared by the leaders of commercial enterprise as well as by the citizens of martial inclinations, and to the love of display which they all cultivated we owe the great "corporation pieces" by Van der Helst, Bol, Hals and others, which are among the most spectacular canvases in the museums of Holland. We have only to compare "The Night Watch," Rembrandt's great corporation piece at Amsterdam, with the similar works by Van der Helst in the same city, or with the paintings of Hals at Haarlem, to see, at once, why the supreme master dissatisfied the "Frans Banning Cocq Company of Musketeers," which was his patron. Portraiture was what the guilds wanted, and portraiture was what was given to them by Van der Helst and Hals. Of course Rembrandt was capable of giving it too, and in greater perfection. He had done so in "The Anatomy Lesson" of 1632; and much later, in 1661, he executed the matchless group in the Rijks Museum, which is known as "The Syndics of the Cloth Hall," a corporation piece distinguished by the very highest qualities of portraiture in every one of its six figures. But in 1642 Rembrandt was burning with an ambition which the painting of "The Night Watch" gave him the chance to gratify. It required adversity to make him complaisant. In prosperity he would carry out his own ideas and suit himself before all others, and "The Night Watch" was produced out of the untrammelled workings of his genius. It contains some portraits, some that are superb, but it is first and last a picture. Lingering with eagerness over a brilliant scheme of chiaroscuro, he made the picture a vehicle for one of the almost musical improvisations in light and shade which gave him the keenest delight. Possessed by a dramatic conception, he marshalled his figures with far less thought of their individual significance than of the pictorial ensemble he had in mind. Never was he more scenic in motive, never were the elements of his design welded together more firmly, and never did he throw upon his canvas a richer pageant of color. All this, however, was in a sense extraneous, or should at any rate have been subsidiary, to the plan of the guild. The members were outraged in their dearest feelings. "Each had paid for a good likeness of himself and a good place in the picture." Rembrandt contented himself with emphasizing the features of Banning Cocq and the fellow officer who stands in the centre of the composition, but he used the other figures mainly as pictorial expedients. He "sacrificed their personalities to aesthetic considerations." This struck at the roots of popular suffrage, and it is not surprising that Rembrandt suffered a diminution of prestige from this time on until his death.

It testifies to the vigor of Rembrandt's genius that as his renown declined neither the pangs of that misfortune nor his sorrow over Saskia's death could make him less prolific or less of a master. He never lost his thirst for improvement in his work. "Between the timidities of his prudent, though ardent youth, and the audacities of his old age," says M. Michel, "there was a whole life of labor. Review his various phases with care and all his transformations fall into their frame; his genius appears as a perfectly regular and natural whole." The withdrawal of celebrity from Rembrandt meant nothing to him beyond a painful emotion and a decrease of fortune. Shortly after the year of "The Night Watch" he painted the magnificent "Portrait of Elizabeth Bas" which should have shown the artists and dilettanti their folly in deserting his standard; his landscape faculty was given a new impetus by the communion with nature into which his loneliness threw him; and both as etcher and painter he took great strides forward. These years are full of portraits of the limited circle of friends and patrons still remaining to him. But the academic taste of the day was inexorable, and he was thrown back upon himself. Though never without a certain following, his time was much more his own than formerly, and he spent it in the seclusion of his home.

When M. Michel speaks of Rembrandt's "prudent youth," as noted above, he is speaking of the artist solely. As a man Rembrandt was extravagant and as imprudent as it was possible for him to be. He was fond of gorgeous embellishments for his studio, fond of jewels and fine brocades for Saskia, fond of pictures by other artists, of prints and drawings, and he was excessively careless of the monetary obligations involved in the satisfaction of his hobbies. His affairs went from bad to worse. He got into the hands of the money-lenders. In 1657 he was declared a bankrupt. In the following year his house and all its treasures were sold to meet the demands of his creditors, and "at the age of fifty-five he found himself homeless and penniless, stripped of all that had made life pleasant to him." He never recovered from this blow. His work went on in an uninterrupted progression of masterpieces, but his fortunes sank lower and lower, with lawsuits and the loss of loved ones embittering his life, until in 1669 he died and the waters flowed over the event with hardly a ripple to mark the date.

The art of Rembrandt was founded on simplicity and deep human sympathy. He worked out problems of lighting which seem artificial in their essence, like the problem solved in "The Night Watch" itself, and he approached again and again, in a realistic mood, some of the sublimest, most idealistic subjects in the Scriptures. Yet his effects are always remarkable for their truth and dignity, for the utter absence of artificiality; and his Biblical compositions are frequently of incomparable pathos and beauty. He had no subtlety of symbolism in his religious designs; for allegory he had neither the taste nor the gift. He could not rise to the majesty of Michael Angelo or Signorelli in their great frescoes, and he was far removed from the sweetness of religious sentiment which Perugino and Raphael raised to the most refined pitch of expression. He did touch with unerring skill the chord to which humanity in the aggregate instinctively responds. Drawing his conceptions from the Bible, he drew his models from the streets of Amsterdam, and he who runs may read what he has to say. With the magic of a rich imagination at his command, and wielding a brush or a point that played familiarly with the secrets of dramatic and awe-inspiring effects, he preferred to remain the greatest of all realists, ancient or modern, and to achieve beauty primarily by the representation of truth. At no stage of his development did he deflect from the resolution, as he has himself expressed it, to put into his pictures "as much of life and reality as possible." "The Night Watch" does not belie this. It may not have satisfied the men who desired their portraits preserved in it, but it is not for that reason any the less realistic. While a great deal of Rembrandt's charm is sensuous, while the technician reverts to the purity and strength of his etched line or to the richness of his impasto and the innumerable passages of flawless execution in his paintings, the critic can never lose sight of the fertility of his ideas, the originality and learning of his compositions, and the indescribable atmosphere of genius which pervades his smallest as well as his greatest works. Before parting with M. Michel's judicious study of the painter in whom so many high qualities were joined, we must say a word for the illustrative assistance the publishers have given him. The volumes contain sixty-seven full-page plates and 250 illustrations in the text. The best French processes have been used in the making of these illustrations, and they are of invaluable service in vivifying the text. An elaborate catalogue completes the work, which is without question the best life of Rembrandt available for English students.

GOLDWIN SMITH'S VERSE.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GREEK TRAGEDIES.

SPECIMENS OF GREEK TRAGEDY. Translated by Goldwin Smith, D. C. L. Two volumes. Pp. xxiii, 247, viii, 173. Macmillan & Co.

Professor Smith as a critic takes the orthodox view, which is tolerant rather than indulgent, toward Euripides as a dramatic writer. But when it comes to translating he gives the last of the three great Greek tragic poets almost as much attention as he gives to both the others. There has always been a discrepancy of this sort between the critical estimate put upon Euripides and the actual interest taken in his works. When he was alive, though he wrote much, he rarely took a prize. Manifestly, as a contestant for the customary awards of the Athenian stage he was subject to formal criticism, and somehow the judges could not often make up their minds to favor him. On the other hand, there is no question that the popular effect of his plays was great, not merely in his own time, but ages afterward. Of course, one thinks of modern writers almost unknown to criticism who, nevertheless, secure a multitude of admirers, and of others whom deliberate censure seems to have made more popular than they were before. But the critics may be right about these modern authors, while, on the other hand, Euripides has stood the test of inspection for over two thousand years. He cannot be bad in a literary sense, though he may be imperfect.

His attitude toward religion was inimical and destructive, but he was only the first of a long line of satirists which culminated in Lucian, of Samosata, that found the absurdities of the Hellenic faith too great to endure in silence. And he could not have struck a harder blow at the popular reverence for Zeus than Aeschylus did in "Prometheus Bound," where the father of gods and men was represented as an unmitigated tyrant. So, Professor Smith says, "this drama is a sublime enigma. Aeschylus was conservative and deeply religious. How could he write a play, the hero of which is a benefactor of man struggling against the tyranny of the king of the gods, and the sequel of which found a fit and congenial composer in Shelley, whose sentiment and manner the 'Prometheus Bound' wonderfully anticipates and perhaps helped to form? Again, how could the Athenians in an age when their piety had not yet given way to scepticism have endured such dramatic treatment of the chief of the gods? It is almost as if a mystery play had been presented in the Middle Ages with Satan for the hero and the First Person of the Trinity in the character of an oppressor." If we had the rest of the story as told by Aeschylus, these questions would answer themselves. Lacking that, it must be remembered how Greek popular religion was underlaid with the doctrine of change. The world was not eternal, and within the world there was a succession of divine rulers. The periodical revolutions of the universe revealed a power higher than the gods, and seemed to solve some contradictions which sceptics were beginning to dwell upon. From this point of view, Aeschylus would seem to inculcate that pious resignation to the order of nature which suited well the peculiarities of antique thought. Just as a man, says Socrates, could be accused of impiety if he ventured upon premature innovations in worship, so the gods themselves would be impious if they sought to resist destiny.

Thus, an excuse can be given for Aeschylus, just as Milton can be justified, though he made of Satan a personage almost worthy of reverence. But the attitude of Euripides was, as has sometimes been remarked, rather more like that of Voltaire than any other modern. He kept the gods. They were useful. But he has no reverence to waste on them. He brings gods and heroes alike down to the level of ordinary man, and he depicts man just as he is. The characters of Euripides are as true to life now as they ever were. Those of Aeschylus and Sophocles never were true. It was only their ideal philosophy which had the aspect of verity. And just because they were not hampered by actual conditions of life, so they were capable of greater sublimity and grace in poetic form. The poet who feels at liberty to depict human life as it ought to be, instead of as it is, can likewise give his poem such a form as it ought to have. But real men must have real surroundings, and these are often sordid, hateful and apparently chaotic. Thus Euripides lacks form more than a little. His odes have no relevancy to the rest of his plays, and sometimes his plots do not hang together. But his character drawing is wonderful, and there are episodes in his plays which even Sophocles, technically perfect as he was, must have envied. Indeed, there is a tradition that Sophocles was influenced strongly by his more youthful contemporary. That Euripides meddled in politics is true; but Aeschylus and Sophocles did the same, though in a less degree. Professor Smith points out that in Aeschylus's "Seven Against Thebes" the character of Amphiaraus was intended for Aristides, who was called the Just, but—if one may trust that new-found piece of Aristotle's—was not impeccable. If Euripides had taken the conservative, aristocratic side in politics, his ancient critics, who were to a man of that party, would have had little to say. Because he was a democrat of the democrats he was censured. Civilization was not broad enough in his time to accept his ideas. But he shattered many illusions, and the lesson he taught, to see things as they are, is the lesson of to-day.

Professor Smith's translations are faithful, rather than poetic. He desires that the reader shall understand the specific peculiarities of the Attic drama, and he is certainly successful in reproducing the rapid one-line dialogue. As to the odes, his own remarks are sufficient. He evidently does not feel the reverence for them in the original which some literary judges confess, and he is positive that they do not lend themselves in translation. "A metrical translation of these odes in English," he adds, "is apt to remind us of the metrical versions of the Hebrew Psalms." Out of his own mouth is he condemned; but let those who would execute the sentence do better than he has done.

LITERARY NOTES.

It would be interesting to know just what Professor H. H. Boyesen means when he talks of "the great wave of Ibsenism that swept over America three or four years ago." The Professor's idea of "a great wave" will be surprising to most reading Americans, who would be apt to compare the very mild Ibsen craze which afflicted some parts of this land to a flow of not particularly fragrant dish-water in a weary back-yard. But Professor Boyesen is an enthusiast.

Concerning Master Ibsen, he said the other day to a correspondent of "The Literary World," of Boston, that "he is just as cold and severe as he looks." "He would snap out a sentence and then stop, and an awkward silence would follow. When I mentioned the word America, Ibsen 'fired up': 'America,' he exclaimed, 'that noisy frog-pond where every contemptible little frog pops his head out of his little pond, and croaks away at his contemptible sentiment!'"

Dr. W. Polk, of this city, has written a biography of his father, the warlike Bishop—General Leonidas Polk—and is about to publish it here and in London through the house of Longmans, Green & Co. Portraits and original maps and battle plans will ornament the work.

The Dean of Westminster is quoted as saying during the Lowell memorial services at the Abbey the other day, that "Mr. Lowell is worthy to be counted among the greatest literary men of this country—Chaucer, Spencer, Milton, Dryden, Shakespeare, and those poets whom England had lost so lately."

Mr. Howells's new play is not new so far as date of composition goes, for it was written several years ago. It is said to be in the style of Ibsen, and is the story of a man who can't agree with his wife—or whose wife can't agree with him.

Those Shakespeare plays which were written and remodelled by Dryden, D'Avenant and others in the Restoration days, are to be issued in "Bankside" style by the New-York Shakespeare Society. Five hundred copies will be printed from type only. The circular proposing this publication has thus far been sent to Bankside subscribers only.

William Edward Norris, the novelist, is the son of the late Sir William Norris, formerly Chief Justice of Ceylon. As a very young man Mr. Norris intended to enter the diplomatic service, but subsequently gave up the idea and was called to the Bar. He has never practised, however, having become too much absorbed in the writing of brilliant fiction. He writes from 3 to 6 every afternoon, and plays golf most mornings, as secretary to the Torquay Golf Club. In explaining his method of writing he says: "I always think a thing out in the rough, draw up a skeleton of the whole, make a sort of scheme with some central figure round which I build, then I divide it into chapters, place the contents of each chapter, and never start until all that is done. Then I go ahead, and seldom make any alterations or corrections. My secretary copies each day's work when finished. I never make out much of a plot, and," he adds quaintly, "it is always a matter of surprise to me that people should like my books. They never turn out what I mean them to be. I have no personal liking for what is called the modern realistic school of fiction, because I don't see the good of it. One does not go to a novel for information as to the uglier facts of existence."

Mr. Norris lives in a charming old house at Torquay, where his life is brightened by a beautiful daughter, a collection of splendid horses and dogs and some lovely gardens, in which he takes great pleasure. "I care more for music and gardening than anything else," he says.

Those who have lamented the tendency of a neat paper label on the back of a well-bound book to get itself torn off or to get dirty will approve the new idea of the Macmillans. This is to provide for each volume of the Cambridge Shakespeare half a dozen extra labels in two different styles.

The romance which Joaquin Miller is preparing to publish is to be called "The Building of the City Beautiful."

The interesting reprint of the old-fashioned early edition of Dickens, with the original illustrations, is about to be completed by the publishers, Macmillan & Co. Charles Dickens the younger has written a short biographical and historical preface for each volume.

Chicago is to have a magazine which expects to irradiate the horizon with glory. Its title—"The Lakeside Magazine"—is not specially attractive.

Daudet says of his old friend, Turguenieff: "To me there are two Turguenieffs—one whom I knew, amiable, sympathetic and charming; and then the other, a Turguenieff from beyond the tomb, who treated me like a galley-slave." Said M. Zola: "I was very fond of Turguenieff, and he was very fond of me." M. Edmond de Goncourt writes concerning the Russian: "An unequalled talker, a writer much below his reputation. A landscapist, a charming painter of 'sous-bois,' but not a painter of human nature; observation with him is either non-existent or false. A singular thing that this refined, sensitive, almost feminine man was pleased above all with the company of coarse people."

An English critic writes of Hawthorne's "American Note-Books" as "that inexhaustible storehouse of psychological problems." This is apropos of the fact that the germ of the Jekyll and Hyde idea was found in the "inexhaustible storehouse."

Here is an odd note which has just been sent out by a publisher: "Mme. Sarah Grand desires to contradict the statement that has lately been freely published in the American press that 'The Heavenly Twins' was written by Mrs. McFall. The work is altogether by Sarah Grand. She begs that members of the American press will accept this fact and add one more to the many kindnesses she has already received at their hands. She particularly appreciates the otherwise most kindly notices of her by many writers for the press who have, however, been incorrectly informed of her name." This is an ingenious and somewhat puzzling statement.

Five large volumes devoted to the industries of Russia have been issued in St. Petersburg and translated into English, under the editorial direction of John Martin Crawford, as a contribution to the literature of the Columbian Exposition. Two of them comprise special studies of manufactures and trade, the third treats of agriculture and forestry, the fourth embraces mining and metallurgy and the fifth is devoted to Siberia and the great railway. These volumes contain an immense body of fresh information, prepared by the best-known Russian scientific experts, and are illustrated with finely executed colored maps.

Pope Leo XIII is, if we may believe the Italian papers, at present engaged in writing his memoirs. The work will contain the enumeration of the principles which have guided his career, and his opinions on the political questions which have excited general interest in his lifetime. The book, however, is intended, it is stated, for the perusal of one person only—the next Pope. His Holiness works several hours a day dictating to his private secretary, who is bound by an oath not to reveal what is told him. The Pope also proposes to incorporate in the book reports of conversations which he has held in past years with famous persons and rulers. It is the custom of the Pope to make elaborate notes of the interviews which he grants to visitors, high and low. His Holiness has been at work on the book for some time.

The Tribune has been asked to publish the following request: "Mrs. Edwina Booth Grossmann is writing some reminiscences of her father, Mr. Edwin Booth, and begs her father's friends who possess letters from him to send her transcripts of such as they may wish to add to her publication. These will be thankfully received. Please address Mrs. Ignatius R. Grossmann, No. 12 West Eighteenth-st., New-York."

A MAD POET.

THE STORY OF MACDONALD CLARKE.

For twenty years or more Alexander MacDonald Clarke, the so-called "mad poet," was a marked character in New-York. He was seen on Broadway morning, afternoon and evening, his favorite walk being from the Battery to Bleecker-st.

Here he had full opportunity to scan the beauty of the city and receive from the smiling faces of women what he thought was a personal recognition of his genius. He was always particular on such occasions to return with great affability some evident token of the pleasure such recognition gave him. His personal appearance on the street was noticeable from the fact that he usually wore a dark blue cloth coat of the patrician cut and a blue cloth cap of liberal size and of a pattern often worn by the nobility abroad when travelling incognito. He affected Byron's airs and costumes to a noticeable degree. When a mere lad while bathing in the Thames River, at New-London, Clarke struck his head against a sharp rock, and, as a consequence, was subject to frequent and violent headaches which tended to make him erratic but not mad. Although excitable, he was not revengeful under provocation, though often sorely tried and vexed. A scribbler for a daily paper

once said to him that it was easy to write like a madman. Clarke replied, "No, sir; it is not easy to write like a madman, but it is very easy to write like a fool."

Clarke was induced to come to New-York by Fitz-Greene Halleck, who made him familiar in an extravaganza, "The Discarded," and who of all others appreciated him and was one of his warmest and stanchest friends. A Bohemian of Bohemians he soon attracted the notice of the coterie of literary men who made up the Bohemia of that day. His undoubted ability and genial nature made him a favorite though the critics were severe. There is no doubt that his life was partially blighted by an early love affair.

Between the years 1819 and 1841 he composed and gave to the world most of his poetical effusions, many of them through the newspapers, but the larger part in book form. The latter were several times published, but are now very rare and expensive. The most important were a "Review of the Eve of Eternity," 1820; "The Elixir of Moonshine," 1822; "The Gossip or a Laugh with the Ladies, a Grin with the Gentlemen," 1824; "Poetic Sketches," 1826; "Afaca, or the Belles of Broadway," 1829; "Death in Disguise," a temperance poem, 1833; poems, 1836, and "A Cross and a Coronet," his last effusion, in 1841. Clarke often wrote in a very dashing, erratic style and was occasionally sarcastic and severe in his retorts.

Generally his poems were written in a genial vein or with a view not infrequently of pleasing the gentler sex. This was his weak side, and from incautious personal allusions to ladies whom he admired, he occasionally got himself into trouble. He "loved pretty women with a poet's feeling."

> Now twilight lets her curtain down
> And pins it with a star.

Sometimes given

> Whilst twilight's curtain gathering far
> Is pinned with a single diamond star,

is the one quotation that saves the name of MacDonald Clarke from oblivion. All the belles and topics of the day are celebrated in his poems. He could be humorous, sentimental and indignant in rapid succession, as his writings show. There is a vein of tenderness pervading all their grotesqueness and irregularity, and they contain many touches of delicate human sensibility. His oddities were all amiable; he had no vices, and was always, in his way, a gentleman. He was rather vain of his appearance, as well he might be, for he was decidedly a handsome man. He walked erect, having a military air, and with measured gait, and seemed as willing to be observed of others as he was to observe them.

Mary Augusta Brendridge, a poor actress on the boards of the Park Theatre, was induced to marry Clarke upon the representation that he was worth $10,000. The marriage took place on the 16th of July, 1821, and was dissolved the following March. When Clarke became so destitute that he hardly knew where his next meal would come from, the actress took pity on him and stealthily supplied him with food and money. This kind office was also performed by Halleck, of whom Clarke said: "I would rather have a kind word from that nobleman, Fitz-Greene Halleck, than from an emperor."

In 1840 Halleck was living in Warren-st., where he was often in the habit of having Clarke "happen in" to breakfast with him. One morning Clarke awoke to find himself penniless, and, though very hungry, having no prospect of a meal. At a loss what to do, he was passing Halleck's door when the poet called him in and gave him a two-dollar-and-a-half gold piece. On his way to the Astor House he chanced to meet a street musician who was playing "Mary of Argyle," an old ballad of which he was very fond. Carried away by the strains of music, Clarke gave the man the only coin he had, the gold piece given him by Halleck, who had happened to witness the whole affair. Clarke, in speaking of it, said: "I ran one way to get rid of Halleck, and the fiddler ran the other way to get rid of me, thinking I had given him the coin by mistake." This is only one instance of the happy-go-lucky way in which the "mad poet" lived.

He possessed a finely shaped head, and the general contour of his features was regular, and the expression of his countenance mild and agreeable. He generally wore a placid, benignant smile, but sometimes appeared to be absorbed in deep thought, evidently not having his mind upon the moving throng and changing scenes around him. His raiment was what would be termed "shabby genteel," but there was something magnetic about the man which especially excited interest in his behalf. His unbuttoned "Byronic" shirt collar looked peculiarly odd when contrasted with the trim attire of the majority of his fellows. He lounged about the street, assuming an abstracted air, with his gaze fixed upon the pavement as if weighed down by some poignant sorrow. When audibly addressed by an acquaintance, he returned the salute as if suddenly aroused from a deep sleep, and after a faint smile of recognition, would relapse into his accustomed brown study. "How does he live?" was often the question of sympathetic women. "Would the unfortunate gentleman accept of some gratuity?" was not unfrequently added as the melancholy genius was on his accustomed tramp, intently seeking for something he was never to find on earth. MacDonald Clarke never suffered for food while there was anything in Windust's storeroom, neither did he lack a few shillings to jingle in his pocket, for he unostentatiously mingled with the generous set, whose motto, "Let us live by the way," included the mad poet within its range.

Though his pen was an active one, his purse was never heavy, and there is a bit of pathos in the entry, "Had to pawn my diamond ring (the gift of a lady), and go tick at Delmonico's for dinner."

He was a regular attendant at the theatre, and not a Sunday passed that he was not seen at Grace Church. One who knew him well has said that a kindlier, more lovable man never lived, but you had only to see him once to realize that he was gay to hide an aching heart. "Recognition" as a literary genius never came to him. On the night of March 5, 1842, Clarke was found aimlessly wandering about the street, and was taken to the city jail by a policeman and put in a cell. The darkness of despair must have come upon him there, and the poet, now mad indeed, doubtless turned on a water faucet and flooded the room, for the next morning he was found dead in a pool of water, a smile upon his face, as though, at last, his dreams were realized. In one of the most beautiful spots in Greenwood Cemetery, overlooking Sylvan Lake, he was laid to rest, and a simple shaft was erected by Fitz-Greene Halleck and a few other friends.

After leading carefully up to the subject the teacher of the class in the Waifs' Mission Sunday-school felt confident that he had made an impression on Snub-Nosed Mike, the bootblack.

"And now, Mike," he said, adapting his style of talk to the vocabulary of the class, "what sort of kids do you think go to heaven?"

"Dead ones," answered Snub-Nosed Mike, solemnly.

And the moral lecture ended right there.—(Chicago Tribune.